

## ABSTRACT

The present invention provides antigenic compositions and methods for treatment and prevention of infection and disease caused by group A and group C streptococci. In particular, the invention provides low molecular weight hyaluronic acid, low molecular weight hyaluronic acid linked to a carrier and compositions comprising them. The compositions elicit antibodies to low molecular weight hyaluronic acid which are cross-reactive with group A and C streptococci and which are minimally cross-reactive with native hyaluronic acid. The invention is particularly useful for providing both active and passive immunogenic protection for those infected with or at risk of infection with group A and group C streptococci. Additionally, the present invention provides methods and compositions useful for diagnosing infections and diseases caused by group A and group C streptococci.